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ABSTRACT

The interview is a special case of interpersonal communication. It is a communication event with a serious and predetermined purpose with the basic mode of communication being the asking and answering of questions. People are engaged in interviews throughout their lives from the employment setting to the counseling setting. This annotated bibliography contains 32 references from 1976-1994 where the primary purpose of the investigation was to determine the relationship between gender and the interview outcome. Examples of topics covered are: interview validity for selecting sales clerks; unfair discrimination in the employment interview; importance of researcher's gender in the in-depth interview; contrast effects for black, white, male and female interviewees. Citations come from journals, books, and conference papers. (JBJ)

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Gender In Interviewing

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The following is an annotated bibliography on the topic of gender and interviewing. The interview is a special case of interpersonal communication. It is a communication event with a serious and predetermined purpose with the basic mode of communication being the asking and answering of questions. People are engaged in interviews throughout their lives from the employment setting to the counseling setting.
Here is a selected list of sources where the primary purpose of the investigation was to determine the relationship between gender and interview outcomes.

Arvey, R.D., Miller, H.E., Gould, R., & Burch, P. (1987). Interview validity for selecting sales clerks. Personnel Psychology, 40, 1-12.

This study is concerned with the validity of interviews for selecting sales clerks. Interviewer judgements, gender, and age data were collected in this study for job applicants interviewing for sales clerks positions. There were three objectives: 1) to assess the overall interview validity in a context where the interview would be a vehicle for predictor information, 2) to examine interview data for evidence of bias as a function of age and gender, and 3) whether interviewers are equally predictive in their interview judgements across gender and age groups. The findings correspond to the prediction of higher evaluations for females, given the nature of work, and older applicants because they were seen as more reliable and stable in their jobs. There was no differences between age and gender.

Bean, J.M., Ferrara, K., & Johnstone, B. (1992). Gender, politeness and discourse management in same sex opinion poll interviews. Journal of Pragmatic, 18 (5), 405-430.

In an attempt to determine if women talk differently to men than they talk to women, the main focus of this survey was to determine politeness and discourse management. The interviews were constructed from a script which consisted of questions related to the performance of various public officials, gun control, health care abortion, and nuclear energy. Respondents were picked by random digit telephone dialing. The results indicated that women scored higher in the politeness category and the men scored higher in the discourse management category.

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Binning, J.F., Goldstein, M.A., Garcia, M.F., & Scattaregia, J.H. (1988). Effects of pre-interview impressions on questioning strategies in same and opposite-sex employment interviews. Journal of Applied Psychology, 73 (1), 30-37.

These investigators were trying to discover what effect pre-interview impressions (low or high suitability) would have in same and opposite sex employment interviews. It was hypothesized that those interviewees who were viewed more favorably (high suitability) would be asked more confirmatory (positive) questions by the interviewers. One significant result indicated that men and women alike, regardless of whether they anticipated a same or opposite sex interviewer, used negative questions in a confirmatory manner. However, it was shown that interviewers asked a greater number of positive questions for a suitable, same-sex applicant. It was also shown that interviewers planned to ask a greater number of positive questions of a low-suitability applicant when the applicant was of the opposite-sex.

Campion, J.E., & Arvy, R. (1982). Research on unfair discrimination. The Employment Interview, 67-70.

Discrimination during an interview was the topic of this study. It was found that as information increased, stereotypical judgements decreased. The study also found that if the interview pool was less than 25%, the female applicant would be evaluated more unfavorably. In addition, results indicated that women are given higher evaluations when the job applied for fit the sex-stereotyped nature of the job. Moreover, interviewers appeared to be more lenient on the male applicant followed by a female rather than a female followed by a male.

Cesare, S.J., Dalessio, A., & Tannenbaum, R.J. (1988). Contrast effects for black, white male and female interviewees. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 18 (15), 1261-1273.

This article examined the effects of four types of target applicants on contrast effects in interview situations. The four types of applicants consisted of white male and females, and black males and females. Three simulated interviews were viewed and rated by 120 undergraduate students. Five interview scripts consisting of nine questions and pre-scaled responses were incorporated into the study. The results concluded that black males showed less of a contrast effect than white males and black females.

Champion, J., Richard, A. (1982). Unfair discrimination in the employment interview. The Employment Interview, 68 -72.

Campion and Richard conclude in this paper that gender bias is substantially affected by contextual and situational variables, making it difficult to conclude that automatic bias exists against females in the interview process. Instead, bias, when it does occur, appears to be a function of the job type, amount of job information available to the interviewer, and the qualifications of the applicant. The paper concludes that further research should not only increase interview fairness, but should also benefit employee productivity and morale.

Cotterill, P. (1992). Interviewing women: Issues of friendship, vulnerability, and power. Women's Studies International Forum Journal, 15, 593-606.

Studying close relationships between women , Coterril was interested in the discussion that occurs during an interview. Taking a feminist approach, the methods of interviewing and establishing relationships with people were based on reciprocity and were adapted when necessary to meet the needs of a particular question. The article touched on being a "friendly stranger", a "sympathetic listener", and "transition to friendship."

Edwards, R. (1990). Connecting method and epistemology: A white women interviewing black women. Women's Studies International Forum, 13, 477-490.

This article addresses three principles related to research of women interviewing women: 1) women's lives need to be discussed in their own terms, 2) feminist research should not just be on women but for women, and 3) feminist methodology involves putting the researcher into the process of production. In addition, the researcher pointed out that when interviewing someone of another culture, one should be both "inside" the culture and participating in that culture.

Forsythe, S., Drake, M.F., & Cox, C.E. (1985). Influence of applicant's dress on interviewer's selection decisions. Journal of Applied Psychology, 70 (2), 374-378.

Identifying the influence of dress on hiring recommendations received by women interviewing for middle management positions was the focus of this study. Four women dressed in costumes ranging from least masculine to most masculine. Seventy-seven personnel administrators watched interview videos of the four subjects. The videos were watched without audio so that the subjects could rate the applicant based solely upon her clothing. Results indicated that the applicant wearing the moderately masculine costume received more favorable hiring recommendations.

Gallios, C., Callan, V.J., & Palmer, J.M. (1992). The influence of applicant communication style and interviewer characteristics on hiring decisions. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 22 (13), 1041-1060.

Gallios et. all designed this study to investigate the role of gender and communication styles of job applicants in relation to the gender and sex-role stereotyping of interviewers in the interviewing process. Fifty-six personnel officers involved in clerical selection were employed to view videotapes of mock interviews. These interviews contained both males and females who demonstrated three different types of communication styles: aggressive, assertive, and non-assertive. The results of the study indicated that the interviewers identified, liked, and were more likely to hire assertive candidates than aggressive or non-assertive applicants.

Gardner, D.G., & Discenza, R. (1988). Sex effects in evaluating applicant qualifications: A reexamination. Sex Roles, 18 (5/6), 297-308.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether female applicants are evaluated on selection criteria different than males for a given, specific job. Of the two studies conducted, one was a replication of a former study which asked 144 undergraduate students to rate which characteristics were most appropriate for the named subject (female or male) applying for a "white-collar" job. The second study gave a more specific description of the job type (clerical or managerial) in order to see if some characteristics would be more suited to female vs. male applicants. There was not a statistically significant difference between genders, although there was a slight indication of it. The results do not disconfirm the existence of sex-stereotypes and in fact support that there was biases toward what jobs women are more qualified for.

Glick, P. (1991). Sex based discrimination in occupational prestige, occupational salary, and hiring. Sex Roles, 25, 351 - 378.

The relationship between gender-typed personality traits according to the types of traits associated with the job, and perceived traits of the applicant was the focus of this study. Participants in the survey were instructed to read the enclosed applicant information carefully and then to indicate whether or not they would interview the applicant for each job listed.

Green, G., Barbour, R.S., Barnard, M, & Kitzinger, J. (1993). Who wears the trousers? Sexual harassment in research settings. Women's Studies International Forum, 16, 627-637.

Exploring sexual harassment with social research projects about HIV, interviewers interviewed both men and women about their sexual behavior in multiple settings: home, work place, closed offices. The results were that raising such issues in the semiformal structure of an interview was often interpreted as having sexual overtones. Some male interviewees found the questions sexually provocative because of the sexual taboo related to women discussing sex. In addition, when the interviewer was a female, female respondents seemed to be more comfortable and honest, whereas male respondents seemed to be embarrassed and were hesitant in answering questions.

Harkness, S., & Warren, C. (1994). The good worker: Race and gender in a 1970's southern city. Sociological Perspectives, 37(2), 269-292.

This study involved reviewing and analyzing the effects of variables such as gender and race in establishing an employer's conception of a "good worker." The research was done in the South and concentrated on establishing why one interview candidate is chosen from amongst many other qualified applicants. Results showed that the employer did not overtly discriminate, but rather applicants tended to "select themselves out" of the process for lack of an environment which promoted a diversity in hiring practices.

Heikes, E.J., & Williams, C.L. (1993). The importance of researcher's gender in the in-depth interview: Evidence from two case studies of male nurses. Gender & Society, 7 (2), 280-291.

Heikes and Williams wanted to determine the influence gender has on in-depth interviews. Comparing data from two independently conducted in-depth interviews, one by a female researcher and one by a male researcher, observed differences in how men in the samples framed their responses to questions in the two studies are discussed. Results indicated that when female interviewers interviewed men, the men did not interrupt with statements about their sexual orientation when asked questions about gender differences. The male nurses also presumed a different sort of shared experience and understanding with the female interviewer. These outcomes indicate that gender was not an issue among the male nurses.

Herod, A. (1993, August). Gender issues in the use of interviewing as a research method. The Professional Geographer, 45 (3), 305-318.

The purpose of this research was to discover the effect of gender in interviewing. The study sought to show how gender can shape the use of interviews as a research tool. There were three broad areas that formed the focus of the research concerning gender and interviewing. First, how the gender of an interviewer or interviewee may shape the research process. Second, how gender relations are implicated in the structure of particular research methodologies. Third, how gender assumptions can affect how information generated in an interview is interpreted.

Jablin, F. M., & Miller, V.D. (1987). The on-campus job screening interview. In B.D. Sypher, Case studies in organizational communication. 17-48, New York: Guilford Press.

The focus of this article centered on the interview profiles of two students , one male the other female, vying for the same job. The emphasis was on the preparation of each candidate and the perception of the interviewer of the candidates. The case study examines the cues exhibited by the candidates and the biases of the on-campus male interviewer. Evaluative studies were done on the communication exchanges such as speech pauses, utterances, and non-fluencies.

Jackson, T. (1976). Interviewing women: Avoiding charges of discrimination. New York: Executive Enterprises Publication Company, Inc.

Jackson emphasizes that sex stereotyping tends to occur during the selection interview. During the selection interview, a communication process described as "short cuts" occurs which can have a tendency to ineffectively assess the credentials of the candidate. To counteract these tendencies, the book offers these suggestions: 1) get in touch with your stereotypes, 2) make concise evaluations, and 3) measure results.

Johnstone, B., Ferrarra, K., & Bean, J.M. (1992). Gender, politeness, and discourse management in same-sex and cross-sex opinion-poll interviews. Journal of Pragmatics, 18, 405-430.

Analyzing interviewer's strategies for managing the flow of discourse and for displaying the politeness required to keep the interaction going was the focus of this study . The study looks at forty-eight telephone public-opinion poll interviews conducted by eighteen female interviewers that probes both positive and negative politeness, as well as different management discourse techniques. Overall, females were more polite to females than they were to males; however, this was not found to be statistically significant. There were more significant

differences for discourse management between males and females.

Kane, E.W., & Macaulay, L.J. (1993). Interviewer gender and gender attitude. Public Opinion Quarterly, 57, 1-28.

The research conducted in this study was done to analyze the effects of interviewer gender in response to gender-related questions. It also discusses the interviewer effects on the interviewee as the interviewee may be wary of offending an opposite-sex interviewer. Twenty-nine interviewers, fourteen males and fifteen females, conducted a large scale random phone survey on four gender-related issues: home-related gender issues, work-related gender issues, action orientations (government and policy), and perceptions of men's and women's group interests. By employing a multivariate model, the study was able to view both the respondent and interviewer variables. While interviewer-gender effects were statistically significant, there was no significant correlation between interviewer gender and respondent gender.

Kleinke, C.L., & Williams, G. (1993). Effects of interviewer status, touch and gender on cardiovascular reactivity. Journal of Social Psychology, 134, 247-249.

The researchers conducted this study to discover whether gender, status, and touch within an interview influenced cardiovascular activity in an interviewee. Increased cardiovascular activity could then be interpreted to mean a higher level of anxiety or tension. The interviewer group consisted of three men and three women, ranging from twenty-four to twenty-eight. There were ninety-two participants, both male and female, who were told that their blood pressure would be monitored throughout the interview. Some of the interviewers were introduced as high status (graduates) and others as low status (undergraduates). The results of the study indicated that gender and touch had no effect on the interviewee, but that the status of the interviewer did effect the cardiovascular reactions of the interviewee.

Lueptow, L.B., Moser, S.L., & Pendleton, B.F. (1990). Gender and response effects in telephone interviews about gender characteristics. Sex Roles, 22, 29-40.

Lueptow et. all investigate the effect of gender on answers to questions regarding sex roles. The study hypothesized that male interviewers will elicit more responses than female interviewers, especially from females and respondents will disclose more information to females than males. It was found that males essentially give the same responses to either sex, while female respondents are more open to female interviewers.

Motowidlo, S.J., Carter, G.W., Dunnette, M.D., Tippins, N., Werner, S., Burnett, J.R., & Vaughan, M.J. (1992). Studies of the structured behavioral interview. Journal of Applied Psychology, 77 (5), 571- 587.

This work is a compilation of five studies which attempt to assess the psychometric properties of the structured behavioral interview. The first four studies were conducted utilizing data gathered from 8 telecommunications recruiters. The final study was conducted by 3 doctoral candidates who rated audio-taped and documented summaries of 146 interviews. In essence, the studies supported the notion that the reliability, criterion-related validity and construct validity for the structured behavioral interview were consistently strong. Furthermore, findings indicate that race and sex differences did not affect validity of reliability significantly.

Oakly, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms. Doing Feminist Research. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Oakley discusses the differences she sees in the interviewing style of men and women. The author begins with the purpose of interviews: to collect information. Then, the author describes what interview text books say on how to conduct a proper interview and one that will illicit the most information.

Porter, D. (1991). Affective factors in the Assessment of oral interaction: Gender and status. Paper presented at the Regional Language Centre Seminar on Language Testing and Language Programme Evaluation, Sarinee, Anivan.

Exploding the work of Locke who chose to consider the effect of the gender of the interviewer and interviewee was the focus of this paper. The researcher took four males and interviewed them twice; once by a male interviewer and once by a female interviewer. The results indicated that there was an overwhelming tendency for students to be given higher ratings when interviewed by male interviewers.

Preven, D.W., Kachur, E.K., Kupfer, R.B., & Waters, J.A. (1986). Interviews skills of first year medical students. Journal of Medical Education, 61, 842-844.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate and possibly improve the interviewing skills of first-year medical students, and to see if gender (among other factors) influenced these interviewing skills. The only statistically significant result was that the women's techniques were more skillful than the men's.

Reissman, C.K. (1987). When gender is not enough: Women interviewing women. Gender and Society Journal, 1, 172-207.

Reissman demonstrates how two women interviewees use different narrative genres to make meaning of the same event. The two interviews conducted were a study of separation and divorce. The article demonstrated that people of the same gender still experience problems in communication.

Remland, M.S., Jones, T.S., & Brinkman, H. (1990, May). The impact of vocal intensity and gender on the nonverbal communication of employment interviewees. Paper presented at the International Communication Association Convention, Dublin, Ireland.

Vocal intensity of an interviewer and the gender of the interviewees in testing patterns of speech behavioral reactions to speech style was the focus of study. These gender differences were manifested in terms of nonverbal behaviors in relation to the employment interview. There were thirty-four interviews consisting of 13 males and 21 females. There was support regarding sex-role expectations differences such as vocal pauses, body adapters, body lean and seating distances.

Ugbah, S., & Majors, R. (1992). Influential communication factors in employment interviews. The Journal of Business Communication, 29, 2.

The researchers explored the factor structure underlying communication behaviors in employment interviews, and the effects of interviewer gender. Results revealed six dimensions of influential communication factors in employment interviews: resourcefulness, written credentials, support for arguments, social attributes, comportment and style. An applicant's support for arguments and social attributes appeared to be more important to younger recruits than to older recruits, but neither gender nor gender by age interaction, significantly affected factor importance.

Walker, I. (1992). Effects of interview's sex on responses to the attitudes toward women scale. The Journal of Social Psychology, 132 (5), 675-677.

Walker's study is a summary of data collected concerning the commonly utilized Attitudes Towards Women Scale; a scale that commonly produces interviewer effects in interviews. The problem of "role expectations" was addressed as a factor in gender effects in interviews. The problem of respondents acting so as not to offend or displease the interviewer is addressed. Two studies were analyzed and the results showed that responses did vary according to the sex of the interviewer.

Williams, C.L., & Heikes, E.J. (1993). The importance of researcher's gender in the in-depth interview: Evidence from two case studies of male nurses. Gender & Society, 7, 280-291.

The purpose of these studies was to discover how gender makes a difference in the in-depth interview. The two original studies consisted of twenty-one interviewees and fifteen interviewers. The interviews were taped and later transcribed. Only two of the transcribed interviews are discussed in this article. Results indicated the opinion of interviewees was shaped by the orientation and opinion of the interviewer.

Winter, J. (1993). Gender and the political interview in an Australian context. Journal of Pragmatics, 20, 117-139.

Winter focused on two interviews in this study. In interview number one, the interviewer is a female journalist and the interviewee is the Prime Minister of Australia. In interview number two, the interviewer is a male journalist and the interviewee is the Treasurer of Australia. Some results of the study indicate that there was a marked difference between the discourse strategies of the female and the male interviewers.